

BEAVER

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LEWISHAM ARREST

General Secretary candidate detained

SAJITHA BASHIR, the LSM candidate for General Secretary at the last elections and leading OSAC campaigner, was arrested in Lewisham on April 21st as she protested, along with hundreds of others, at the National Front march through the area. The arrest came after the march from Forest Hill to a local stadium passed off without incident.

The crowd of local people, mainly youths, and anti-fascists from throughout London, had been unable to reach the Front due to the heavy police protection given to the march and rally, and had gathered in the High Street to march to the railway station in order to intimidate the Front members as they returned home.

Their path was blocked by a police cordon and, according to Ms Bashir, the police launched an attack on the crowd in an effort to disperse it. She claims that they began beating up a 17-year-old girl who was holding one of the banners, and Ms Bashir went to her assistance. The girl was freed but she was arrested from behind and dragged along the pavement to a waiting police van. It is alleged that the whole incident was an unprovoked attack on the protesters; that it is "a vivid refutation of the so-called freedom of speech for everyone," and that they were justified in using violence in resisting arrest.

Ms Bashir was taken to Catford police station where she was charged with obstruction. Pictures were taken of the arrest, but the photographer's equipment was smashed by the police during the incident. About sixty people were arrested, and the majority of these have been charged with offences. Sajitha alleges that those arrested had all been beaten to some extent.

Ms Bashir, a MPhil(Economics) student, is due to appear at Horseferry Road Magistrates' Court on May 13th, along with others arrested. She will plead not guilty. A picket may be organised when the case finally comes up for trial.



Photo: Alex Wynter
Sajitha Bashir

IL PRESIDENTE

Conference reports from K. Hopley in Blackpool

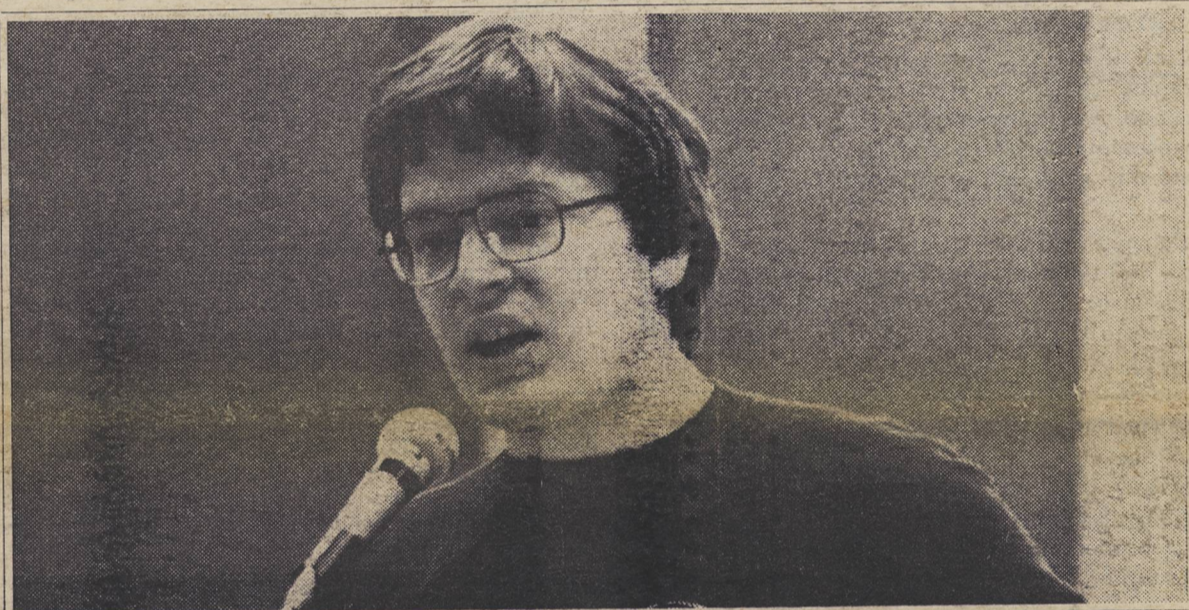


Photo: David Hodge

David Aaronovitch—N.U.S. President-Elect

TO the great surprise of absolutely no-one attending the Ordinary Conference of the National Union of Students in Blackpool during the last week of the L.S.E. Easter recess, 25-year-old David Aaronovitch was elected as the next President of N.U.S. Mr. Aaronovitch, a member of the Communist Party standing on the Left Alliance ticket, was elected on the fourth count. The first preferences were distributed: Aaronovitch (Left Alliance) 272; Hepburn (S.W.S.O.) 98; Hamel-Smith (Independent) 97; Souby (F.C.S.) 91; Roe (Socialist Students Alliance) 80.

Mr. Aaronovitch then picked up a steady stream of transfers, though 80% of Pauline Roe's vote transferred immediately to Stuart Hepburn.

Mr. Aaronovitch has been National Secretary for the past two years, and now bears all the hallmarks of a professional student. He was first educated at Oxford University, but was asked to make his departure when he failed the German paper, and he then went to Manchester University, where he graduated in history, a distinction he shares with none other than Dr. Rhodes Boyson of the D.E.S. He is an excellent public speaker who always seems to have several answers to each question. He is also fond of grandiose terminology, describ-

ing ad hoc committees of the Executive intended to give advice to individual Unions in the smaller colleges as "task forces" with the role of "trouble-shooting." Much to the disappointment of some members of the L.S.E. delegation, I am assured that Mr. Aaronovitch will not self-destruct.

The Left Alliance also took all the other four full-time posts—again as expected. After constitutional changes, there is no Deputy President to succeed Alan Christie, but there are two Vice-Presidents. The Vice-President (Education) will be Andrew Pearmain (Left Alliance/Communist Party) and the Vice-President (Welfare) will be Leighton Andrews (Left Alliance/Liberal). Mr. Andrews will take over immediately due to the resignation of his predecessor. The new National Secretary is Fiona Mactaggart (Left Alliance) and the National Treasurer, Helen Connor (Left Alliance/N.O.L.S.) has secured re-election.

The Left Alliance did not have things entirely its own way in the elections for the part-time posts, though, and there is no overall majority on the executive (though the control of the five full-time offices makes it fairly easy for the Left Alliance). Elected as Executive Officers were Chris Hamel-Smith (Independent with Lib-

eral connections), Jane Taylor (Left Alliance) and Hank Hastings (S.S.A.).

The new Executive members will be Mark Cassidy (National Organisation of Labour Students), Jan Nielsen (S.W.S.O.), Chris Bones (F.C.S.) and Steve Reicher (S.S.A.), and the Executive Committee members will be Linda Miller (Left Alliance), Alan Watson (N.O.L.S.), Ann Henderson (S.S.A.), John Rees (S.W.S.O.) and Mark Wooding (F.C.S.) The Executive is completed by the Chairmen of Scotland and Wales areas. The scene seems set for an interesting year ahead, then, with no overall control, but the Left Alliance remains very much the largest group.

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BRITISH MOVEMENT DISRUPT RAG BALL

TROUBLE flared when British Movement gate-crashers disrupted last term's Rag Ball, injuring three people. There were twelve arrests, and eight other gate-crashers were thrown out of college premises.

The disturbance began shortly before the main attraction, Gary Glitter, went on stage, when 25 supporters of the British Movement, who had forcibly broken into the Old Building, began chanting racist slogans.

They also attacked spectators at the front of the hall, injuring three people, one of whom was taken to hospital suffering from concussion.

Until that point, there had been no violent incidents, but many who were there noticed what one organiser described as "an atmosphere of increasing tension", and British Movement graffiti was sprayed on walls and furniture.

Although all 1,000 tickets were sold in advance, and the event was only publicised within LSE, a large crowd of outsiders gathered at the entrance to the Old Building at the start of the Rag Ball, demanding to be allowed in.

When they were refused admission, about 200 of them, including 25 British Movement supporters, broke in, forcing open locked doors, smashing skylights, and walking along the top of the connecting bridges to enter through the Old Building roof.

Although there were only three injuries, Social Secretary Toby Rose admits that "it could have turned into a full-scale riot."

"The stewards dealt with the disturbance very well considering the circumstances," he said, "but I was worried that we might not be able to cope."

In Toby's view, the main problem was the decision to spread Rag Ball events through the entire building, making it difficult to keep out determined gatecrashers.

While he accepts that the stewarding arrangements proved to be inadequate, he argues that the disturbance could not have been foreseen, because the event was only advertised to students, and he had not anticipated the arrival of a large and organised group of outsiders.

The disturbance is similar to that at a UK subs gig at Queen Mary College last November, which was broken up by forty slogan-chanting skinheads, who were wearing British Movement badges.

On that occasion, two people were injured, one of whom required several stitches, after being butted by a skinhead who objected to an anti-racist badge that he was wearing.

There was also trouble at University College's Foundation Ball which was gatecrashed by a gang, including several British Movement supporters, who shouted abuse, and jostled students. It is also alleged that members of the gang indecently assaulted a female student.

On this occasion, one cause of the trouble was that the band had arranged outside advertising, apparently without informing the Students' Union.

SARAH LEWTHWAITE

MORE SMOKE SIGNALS

Sir,

AN article by Mr Eden Riche in the February edition of *Beaver* on the discomfort he is caused by smokers prompted a sharp response from Mr Rob Blackburn (Letters, March *Beaver*), who felt that smokers were defamed in Mr Riche's article. Rather than getting irate, Mr Blackburn should perhaps have considered what prompts normally reasonable, well-balanced people to feel so "intolerant" towards smokers.

I feel that the old adage of "My right to swing my arm stops at your face" applies here. While I have no objection to smokers hastening along their way to an early grave, I do object to them taking me with them.

Many non-smokers have long assumed that the risks are not just run by those indulging in the habit, and this view has been strongly supported by a

recent study by Drs Froeb and White of the University of California, and published in the "New England Journal of Medicine." This concluded that non-smokers working in smoky offices and factories run a risk of lung damage similar to that of ten-a-day smokers.

The study took 2,100 middle-aged men and women (excluding anyone with heart or lung disease or who lived in a polluted area) and measured the amount of air per second a person could breathe out in a forceful exhalation. The amount and rate of air produced in the middle and end of an exhalation is accepted as an indication of the state of health of the lungs.

Non-smokers working and living in a smoke-free environment produced up to 50% more air than heavy smokers (predictably) and (more interestingly) up to 25% more air than non-smokers who lived or worked in a smoky environment. The performance of those non-smokers who had worked in a smoky environ-

ment for twenty years was similar to those who had inhaled up to 10 cigarettes a day for twenty years.

How many smokers think what damage they may be doing to other people's lungs when they indulge in their habit? Do they think about anybody in the room with a heart condition or lung disease? Apart from health considerations we have to suffer from eye and nose irritation, which can spoil a trip to the cinema, and from clothes stinking like an ash-tray after an evening in a pub.

Some smokers do show consideration for others, many more do not. I dislike the imposition of rules, but if more smokers cannot show a bit more common decency then I see no reason why we should not follow the lead of some rather more civilised countries with a ban on smoking in public places. And (to be slightly flippant) put smoking where it should be — done by consenting adults in private!

ANDREW SMITH

LETTERS

HAVE any of you ever asked yourselves why you are at the LSE? Is it to "waste" three years, as a means to a career, merely to obtain that "piece of paper" which is of ever-diminishing value or, to discover more about yourself and this crazy world in which we live?

Maybe you already know all the answers and if this is the case, you need not bother to read on; but I suspect that some of us are not so sure. Those for whom the pursuit of knowledge is a relatively important factor, will almost certainly find themselves in the category of the disappointed and disgruntled student.

From my own limited experience in the IR and Government departments, the strict gearing of the courses to the examination system, the general lack of time to do justice to the many courses and a pervasive orientation toward "conventional wisdom", all contribute to this dissatisfaction.

For many courses, the lectures and classes do not seem to correlate and there are enormous difficulties in obtaining relevant, up-to-date and comprehensive reading lists let alone the proverbial reading matter. How many of us have had to rely on more-or-less

amenable class teachers for reading recommendations; and how many have been disappointed to discover that if it is a subject which is not of particular interest to that teacher, the recommendations are not a great deal of use. Discussion can be perfunctory since it is both difficult if not impossible to be original or stimulated when perpetual essay questions have been answered by generations of students using the same text books, and to resuscitate those uninterested or static academics who have understandably become bored with the whole process.

Since students have no real say as to how they are to be educated (the student/staff committees as we all know were only a concession after the 1968 unrest and are hardly the place for fundamental discussion) what can the enquiring student do to remedy the situation?

For a start, we might, instead of learning how to answer the standard questions, actually begin to ask them, and not only to ask any questions but to learn how to ask the "right" ones.

If this is all we learn while we are here, we will at least have achieved something.

Yours sincerely,
"ADGE" CUTLER

ROBINSON ROOM CLOSURE MAY BE TERMINAL

THE Robinson Room restaurant, one of the LSE's four major catering outlets, is to remain closed until the end of the term, and Richard Shackleton, union senior treasurer, said last week that there was a strong possibility that it would never re-open.

In the last financial year the restaurant lost £8,445 — over twice as much as the deficit at any other outlet. High staffing costs and low turnover have led to substantial losses in the past two terms and its ultimate closure.

Shackleton cites the "unoriginality of meals" as the main reason why the restaurant has proved unpopular with students. "People's eating habits have changed from the traditional 'meat and two veg' format — and the success of the Brunch Bowl and the Pizza-

burger is proof enough of that."

The Robinson Room's services are now transferred to the Brunch Bowl which will remain open until 7 pm. Next term there are plans to install a comprehensive range of drink vending machines and a snack dispenser in the restaurant's smoking area.

Despite reports from the Central Catering Services that "the arrangement is for this term only without prejudice to longer term consideration," Shackleton sees the Robinson Room as "a dying enterprise." If it does re-open next term it now seems likely that substantial changes will be made over the summer vacation — especially as far as meal choices are concerned — in order to attract more students from the frequently overcrowded Brunch Bowl and Pizzaburger restaurants.

BEAVER

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“SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE JEWS”

says Deputy Soviet Ambassador Bykov

IT is certainly not facetious to suggest that visits by the ambassadors of the great powers to the LSE should be high on the list of recommended school entertainments. Those students who were at either the visit of Kingman Brewster, the US ambassador, or Vladimir Bykov, the deputy Soviet ambassador, will know why. Those who weren't read on . . .

Mr Bykov came to the LSE last term to give a talk on "coexistence." The focal point, however, turned out to be Afghanistan. Just as Mr Brewster had come to speak on "American credibility in the 80s" and ended up having to account for his country's actions in Iran over the last few years so Mr Bykov played the role of flak catcher for the recent Soviet invasion of Afghanistan for most of the two hours he spent at the LSE. Helping him take it were Alex Shalnev of Tass and Mr Kalygin of Soviet TV. John Tusa of "Newsnight" and Jonathan Steele of the Guardian helped dish it out with Geoffrey Stern of the LSE never far behind.

The meeting was also very effectively chaired by S. M. Jamie but he laid himself open to charges of sexism by referring to would-be female questioners as "girls."

It was instructive to compare the reception given to Mr Bykov with that which Kingman Brewster received. At the American meeting, which was dominated by Iranian students as well as the issue of Iran, the hostility of some members of the audience toward the panel was unmistakable. It was sincere and heartfelt. The Russians, on the other hand, were treated with something approaching disdain. Exchanges like this characterized the event:

BYKOV: Our troops were invited into Afghanistan by the government of Amin, before Taraki, and then by Karmel. What happened in transition was not our affair. Amin was a CIA agent. (Cries of disbelief from the audience). Yes he was

—it's not a joke. In Egypt President Sadat invited Soviet advisers in when he came to power. What happened later on? (Cries of "he threw you out").

SHALNEV: They invited us fourteen times to send troops.

STEELE: We've heard that you were invited in by the CIA. Did you know at the time of the invasion that Amin was a CIA agent?

BYKOV: Why do you always listen to Western intelligence? It's not one hundred per cent, you know.

STEELE: But you just told us!

BYKOV: According to our information Amin was a CIA agent when he was executed.

KALIGIN: Who put Amin in power in Uganda anyway?

BYKOV: And General Pinochet in Chile?

Etc, etc . . .

One is led to the conclusion that it is not really worth trying to get the Russians to be honest about their actions in the world in public at the LSE. Another ghastly moment came when someone asked Mr Bykov a question about Dr Andrei Sakharov, the banished Soviet dissident:

BYKOV: I'm sure that if Sakharov went on trial he would get the highest . . . er . . . er . . .

STEELE: Sentence.

BYKOV: Sentence. Er no, the best legal aid. (Laughter and applause).

Poor Mr Bykov. Someone in

the Embassy's advance team should have told him about the deadly sophistication of the average LSE Forum audience.

But there was an undercurrent of sympathy for the Russians. One cry of "what about the Palestinians" seemed to be enough to silence the group of Jewish students in mock prison garb; two Eritrean students had their question-statements cut short by shouts of "let them answer" and there was considerable annoyance at the start of the meeting when someone at the back of the theatre started to goad the Russians with the Afghanistan issue. The LSE Spartacists were well distributed—one upstairs and one downstairs—but they managed little beyond a suggestion that the Russians bring Afghanistan into the twentieth century as quickly as possible.

One had to admire the moral courage of the Russians in twice postponing their departure in order to continue answering questions but wished that they could have put up a better performance. "Some of my best friends at college were Jews," said Mr Bykov in reply to a question of treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union, "and I'm very surprised at this question," and, presumably, the laughter which followed his answer. "The SALT treaty took four years of discussion," complained Mr Shalnev, "because of the notorious American election." Another fatal slip.

But finally a word should be said for our own Geoffrey Stern lest you get the idea that Russians were the only ones with custard on their chins. A combination of nervous giggles, rather inarticulate comments ("Good heavens, wow") and the odd interruption from him ensured that the latest LSE Forum International descended into complete farce.

ALEX WYNTER

BEAVER DIARY

I HAVE moved into a new flat. It is a delightful change from where I was before. The place reeks with atmosphere—there's a chemical factory over the road; the courtyard resounds with the happy sound of children and the tinkling of broken glass; and the trains are only a stone's throw away. You see, you can find a place if you try; it's only taken me two and a half years. Now I can start to lead the wild student life I read about in the News of the World.

MONDAY

The start of term: and what a drab beginning it is. The weather is uncomfortably humid. LSE is not crowded, but for some reason the canteen—the quaintly named Brunch Bowl—is packed out. The prices have just increased yet again; by my reckoning, the demand defies all the elementary laws of economics. I must talk to Professor Morishima about it.

TUESDAY

People keep coming up to me and asking about the Students

Union. I don't know anything about it. I gave up when they elected Guru Maharaj Ji as the messiah. Please go away.

WEDNESDAY

I am experiencing the first signs of old age. Films I have seen at the pictures appear on television; the singers on Top Of The Pops look awfully young; and fresh faced first years tell me they have never heard of "We Shall Overcome." This morning, in the bathroom mirror, I discovered I have a grey hair. Impending senility is creeping up on me. Maybe I will have left LSE before it happens.

THURSDAY

I feel stale and depressed; I have worked too hard. Roddy Hallifax tries to cheer me up by telling me a joke; I cannot even manage a polite smile. Then he offers me a mathematical puzzle; the answer is 51. Nothing is a challenge any more—except, of course, the mystery of why people still use the catering facilities.

POOTER

BUDGET DAY

IT was with unrestrained passivity that I listened "direct and live" to Sir Geoffrey Howe's budget speech on the 25th of March. I knew it was live because every so often the cameraman would wake up and jolt the field of vision to encompass a passing flock of starlings. These moments, together with David Dimblebum's frequent and annoyingly abrupt conversations with Peter Hobday, were the livelier parts of the afternoons viewing.

Sir Geoffrey's crushingly monotonous voice is a very useful political device. He managed to begin the dismemberment of the welfare-state without any of the Labour front bench. Child benefits were slashed, prescriptions doubled and at no time was the vocal response of the opposition anything more than a deep, privileged rumble.

Why the Hell he wants to make life as horrible as possible for the mass of the population over the next four years in an attempt to achieve a far from certain theoretical goal, I cannot understand. I realize that from his position of a good education and a secure future, it's easy for him to forget the plight of those who will lose their jobs because of his so-called "austerity package." Like some porcine Victorian industrialist, he applied the outrageously short-sighted morals of that era to his financial strategy. After the recent announcement of a 14% increase in the student grant, it looks as if our life next year is going to be about a hundred years out of date as well.

After Howe had finished his speech, I saw crowds of people milling around off-licences and tobacconists, all engaged in attempts to pickle their livers and coat their lungs for a few pence less. This is where the Chancellor should have bunged on his increases; not on prescriptions or through cutbacks in child benefit. Even pensioners are subject to a sly attack with the state pension now being linked to the retail price index rather than as previously with the wages or prices index. The

KEITH TUOMI

Sunday Times survey of March 30th showed that in 11 income groups only a company director earning over 30,000 pounds a year is better off after the budget.

After the afternoon Budget Special, I watched the Nationwide evening Budget Special, where most of the depressing gunge was reiterated by a host of experts. It occurred to me after turning on the radio to hear a third version of Budget Special, that the real reason for Britain's economic decline is the colossal amount of resources we devote to the media presentation of Budget Day. ITV even had a computer specially built for instant analysis. It produced exactly the same figures as Peter Hobday did with pencil and paper on the other side, but probably cost the same amount to install in the studio.

In a society where so much complaining goes on, I suppose it makes sense to form an entertainments industry around it. If you can also create a situation whereby you convince those who complain of the underlying triviality of their problems, then you've got it made. There's nothing like boring the population to death for curing the unemployment problem.

EDEN RICHE

THE QUEBEC REFERENDUM

ON May 20 6,000,000 people in the Canadian province of Quebec go to the polls to vote in what may be the most significant election ever held in Canada. Voters will be able to vote "Yes" or "No" on a long, rambling proposition which in effect asks the electorate of Quebec for a mandate to negotiate sovereignty - association with the rest of Canada.

Sovereignty-association is the term phrased by the Parti Quebecois (the Quebec separatist party known as the PQ which has formed the Quebec provincial government since 1976) to describe the kind of relationship the PQ feel Quebec and the rest of Canada should enter into. This relationship would constitute a marked departure

from the present federal structure that exists in Canada.

Quebec would be "sovereign" in that it would make all its own laws, levy its own taxes, have its own citizenship, conduct its own foreign affairs, have its own seat at the UN and have territorial integrity. However, "association" with the rest of Canada would be pursued in that Quebec and Canada would enter into a monetary union with a common currency, allow the free circulation of people and goods and share a variety of community institutions as needs dictated.

Though a "Yes" vote on the referendum would only grant the Quebec government a somewhat limited democratic mandate to begin serious negotia-

tion on the above proposals with the rest of Canada it would raise enormous problems and would have devastating psychological implications in a country sorely affected with regional and linguistic divisions. If a "No" vote results, the situation is in some ways even more precarious as the main political group leading the "pro-Canada" forces, the Quebec Liberal Party, presently advocates a number of proposals that many Canadians outside Quebec find equally unpalatable. These include the shifting of the residual powers clause in the constitution from the federal government to the provinces and the strengthening of the dualist (English-French) conception of Canada.

KEITH TUOMI

RESCUE IN IRAN?

Beaver looks at the tactical problems of an operation to release the American hostages

TWO weeks ago, "Now!" (a sort of secular "The PLAIN TRUTH") published "an exclusive account" by the press's favourite ex-CIA officer, Miles Copeland, of his plan to release the Americans from their embassy in Teheran.

Copeland's scheme involves the precision application of a small team (at a guess, anywhere between 25 and 150 people) and high technology. After the collection of all possible intelligence about the situation, and the recruitment of agents within the embassy, a small team of regionally recruited people (such as Kurds) with a couple of CIA personnel as technical support would infiltrate the vicinity of the embassy. A diversionary explosion would signal the start of the operation and ease the penetration of the compound. Copeland is a little cagey on the next point, but seems to think that narcotics of some kind, administered by the agents within, would provide the key to the incapacitation of the defenders.

With the defences thus softened, the attack team would release and marshall the hostages, and, while everyone must agree that it would be crucial, politically, to limit the violence wreaked against Iranians, it is hard to see how any successful rescue attempt could not involve some Iranian deaths.

In the second phase of the operation, three helicopters, masquerading as a counter-attacking Iranian force, would land at various points, taking over local communications, to prevent the alerting of the real Iranian security forces, and embarking the rescued, the rescuers and some of the defenders to be hostages themselves.

Copeland claims that the CIA has several safe locations near Teheran where the helicopters could flee, preparatory to final evacuation. He implies that these staging areas are in dissident regions such as Azerbaijan (itself too far away). Finally, Copeland hints at support in the departure from Iran "from quarters supposedly hostile to" the US: possibly he means Iraq.

The delineation of the rescue scheme is purportedly vague—for security reasons, Copeland says. But it may just be that it is not an awfully good plan. The inclusion of such gratuitous and meaningless detail as the (unexplained) terms "piffing" and "scrugging" and the code name of the CIA's cosmetician, "Lady Windermere," suggests that this article may be more entertainment than information.

In spite of the lack of details in Copeland's presentation, it is

"Any narcotic gas can be fatal to people with cardiac or respiratory problems, who are more likely to be among the prisoners than their guards."

possible to make some criticisms. It should not be forgotten, however, that Miles Copeland is no longer in the employ of the CIA and that it is not likely that CIA's plan, if they have one, is the same as Copeland's.

Copeland is right to go for a

ground-based infiltration of the embassy. A direct assault by an armoured division or the 82nd Airborne is clearly out, unless war had already broken out. On the question of the recruitment of agents among the "fanatics" within the embassy, Copeland meets critics of his confidence by attacking their lack of experience in "the manipulation of mobs, the inducement of fanaticism, or the turning of intense emotionalism from one direction to another."

It still seems pretty tricky. Any outsider making prolonged contact with anyone within the embassy could bring suspicion upon himself and his recruit. Copeland says that the key to success is convincing the agent that the Americans will succeed, but who is going to believe that? how is the recruiter to go about

"There may come a time in the build-up of American public frustration when the desire for action outweighs any regard for the lives of the hostages."

finding the few within the embassy who might be sympathetic to his position without exposing himself to others? How easy would it be for the agent(s) to smuggle in and plant the necessary "anaesthetics" equipment? All these questions must be faced, and while any planner might legitimately claim that each is the normal kind of operational problem that can be overcome with the right men, caution, skill and luck, the sum of them all is daunting to any but the most obdurate optimist.

It is very unlikely that an agent could ensure the introduction of a narcotic, hidden in food or drink or sprinkled into socks or however, to enough people simultaneously. The use of gas would ensure simultaneity, but with the hostages being held in small groups in different rooms, and presumably in different buildings with open space between, it would be impossible to guarantee an even dispersal of the gas. Also, any narcotic gas can be fatal to people with respiratory or cardiac problems, who are more likely to be among the prisoners than their guards. Finally,

the use of gas would only increase the impression that once again it was a bullying superpower using high technology against the innocent population of a small, developing country.

Even with the anaesthetisation of the defenders, there is a good chance that someone outside the embassy would be alerted. With Revolutionary Guards apparently all over the place with automatic rifles across their backs, and presumably some even at night, it is likely that reinforcements could reach the embassy within minutes, even if, as Copeland's plan goes, other members of the assault group would be controlling local communications and preventing a call-out of the Army.

The rescuers must be pre-



pared to hold out against a counter-attack, but if they are to infiltrate the embassy area inconspicuously, they could not bring in large quantities of equipment. M-16s and AK-47s would be little use against armour, should the Army be alerted.

The answer to all these difficulties is clearly the withdrawal of the Americans as soon as possible after the assault. One or more of the three helicopters would do this. Assuming the smallest sized team—25 men—and unless one is reckoning on heavy casualties among the team and the hostages the helicopters would have to lift out up to 75 people. There are only four American craft capable of carrying a large number of people, the Boeing-Vertol CH-47 Chinook, which has a range of only 185 kilometres, the CH-46F and Sikorsky S-64, both of which are slow and the S-64 short-range, and the S-65 in the CH-53D version, which can carry 55 men 865 kilometres at



315 km/h. Thus two CH-53Ds could extract the hostages plus 60 insurgents and hostage Iranians.

Security and political problems would be limited by establishing the operations base on board a carrier off the coast of Iran, the closest point to Teheran being Bandar-e Shatpur, about 580 km away.

No American helicopter has the range to fly, unrefuelled, from this point to Teheran and back, but, allowing for hover time at the embassy, a CH-53D could take off from the carrier, pick up, and land at some base within 250km of Teheran.

At 315 km/h, the helicopter would take, against headwinds, 2 hours to reach Teheran. It would be a repetition of the classic American mistake to underestimate the opposition and assume that Iranian air defences are no threat. Somewhere along the flight, a radar operator is going to pick up signals, and alert Teheran. If the Iranian Air Force are functioning, the helicopters would need fighter escorts, and the operation multiplies in scale.

An airborne control centre, such as the Boeing E-3A Sentry (distinguished by the huge radome on top), or if its dispatch to the Middle-East were thought too likely to forewarn, a carrier-based Grumman E-2C

"Two CH-53Ds could extract the hostages plus 60 insurgents and hostage Iranians."

Hawkeye, might be thought desirable for the withdrawal from the embassy. Electronics Counter Measures planes, such as the Grumman EA-6A Intruder, would increase the likelihood of getting near Teheran without detection, although the risk is still great. McDonnell Douglas EF-42 Wild Weasel (modified Phantoms) defence suppression planes and gunships, in the form of SH-2 Seasprite helicopters or, with better range, the Lockheed AC-130H, would be useful to deal with groundfire against the helicopters or to support the ground team if under counter-attack. The best fighter planes would be F-18s, but I don't know if there are sufficient numbers available. Between 20 and 40 would probably be needed. The older F-14 is the only other fighter with the range, but, while it's a fine plane, the Iran Air Force has them too.

The entry of the three helicopters, with or without all this support, immediately creates a huge problem, that of dealing with the alert of the Iranian forces. The 2-hour flight time to Teheran is the crucial factor working against the operation. The whole difficulty could be circumvented, and the apparently inexorable increase in the scale of the airborne operation smothered, if the helicop-

ters originated within Iran. If the CIA have some suitable craft standing by already near Teheran, the operation begins to seem possible. But it is difficult to believe that they do.

Alternatively, they could commandeer some Iranian Air Force craft, if they have some suitable, with the additional advantage that they would not have to paint on Iranian colours. However, stealing Iranian craft is obviously a risk, with the possibility of alerting the authorities, and means that one could not be as certain of the reliability or the type of facilities on board as one could with craft belonging to the USN or USAF.

But the most serious problem of all is the three Americans being held in the Foreign Ministry and the possibility that there may have been or could be more dispersals.

I am sure there are many Americans, some possibly serving as CIA, Army or Air Force officers, who would relish the chance of planning and carrying

"The most serious problem of all is the three Americans being held in the Foreign Ministry and the possibility that there could be more dispersals."

out a rescue of "our boys." But the immediate tactical problems of getting into the embassy, defeating the guards, getting out again and out of Iran without at any stage alerting the Iranian armed forces, seem to be so many and their solution so dependent on a very long string of lucky escapes that it is hard to imagine that anyone should attempt such a rescue under the present circumstances.

Of course, circumstances can change, and there may come a time in the build up of American public frustration when the desire for action outweighs any regard for the lives of the hostages. In the light of the present very worrying conditions in South-West Asia, the possibility of formenting a war for the purposes, or in the course, of effecting a rescue, or as a substitute for a rescue should not be accepted lightly.

The USA held off from military action against North Korea for about a year and went through what some Americans felt to be humiliating negotiations in order to secure the release of the crew of the USS Pueblo. Whether America has the strength to repeat that course is the 64,000 dollar question.

This has been almost solely a discussion of the tactical aspect of an American rescue operation in Teheran. However there are clearly very serious political, moral and legal considerations attendant on the planning of any armed action against Iran.

RODDY HALLIFAX

THE RESCUE THAT NEVER WAS

By one of those strange ironies that plague the life of man, this article was being laid out at the very moment the American aircraft were landing in Iran on Thursday night. Irritation with the timing of the operation has not prevented us from presenting this article unchanged, but it is perhaps now of largely historical interest.

DEAR KRISH....

FOLLOWING the severing of diplomatic relations between the London School of Economics and King's College, London, there has been an exchange of letters between the General Secretary of L.S.E. Students' Union and the President of the National Union.

In a letter dated 25th February, Mr. Trevor Phillips criticised the action of the demonstrators from L.S.E., saying that it seemed extraordinary to "invade another college". Furthermore, it was not in "the best traditions of student solidarity". Mr Phillips condemned the actions of Mr. Maharaj as "politically inept" and "inane".

Mr. Maharaj replied in a letter of 14th April, claiming that the action was justified. He asserted that it was inappropriate to represent the L.S.E. action as depriving Boyson of the right to speak, saying that he has the support of the capitalist media "while the students and workers face violent suppression every time they stand up for their rights".

He also denied that there had been any criticism of the action at the U.G.M., even though his

own report on the proceedings was thrown out. In conclusion, Mr. Maharaj claimed that the loyalties of the N.U.S. leadership must be questioned: "anyone who promotes the politics that students must respect the 'democracy' of the rich... is actually working to liquidate the struggles of students" and to check "the seething revolt in the student movement".

When the question of the letters was raised at the Executive meeting on 23rd April, there was a debate on whether or not the General Secretary had the authority to send the letter to Mr Phillips. Mr Maharaj said that, as General Secretary, he must act on behalf of the Union, and it was also argued that it was merely an extension of Executive policy to send an open letter to students of Kings'. The letter was ratified by six votes to four, but Mr. Phillips suggested to me that it was "a lot of balls" and that Mr. Maharaj must be "living on a different planet from the rest of us", "Beaver" will keep readers informed of any more billettoux.

K.H.

BACK BEAVERS

15 YEARS AGO

THE fiftieth issue of "Beaver" at the beginning of May 1965 announced bluntly that "the LSE is almost the worst off, in terms of physical and financial resources, of all the Universities in the country. "The nationwide survey carried out by Union President Alan Evans, revealed that whereas both Liverpool and Birmingham Universities receive £12 per student, the LSE only receives £4 and also whereas Leeds Union can give £2,700 to Union societies, the LSE last term gave only £408. The statistics were used to provide concrete support for a £4,000 claim to finance "new Union development plan". As it turned out, the plan consisted of the complete take-over of the first floor of the St Clements Building by the Union with a proposed lay-out much the same as it remains today.

The leading report concerns a "no-politics" ban imposed by the Iraqi government on Iraqi students in Britain. The Iraqi Students' Society, which included a branch at the LSE, objected particularly to the Iraqi government's action against a second-year student at Leeds University who had been sentenced to a two year prison sentence in his absence because of his political involvement in student affairs. Matters came to a head with the circulation to leading Iraqi students of letters from the Iraqi government threatening "further action" if they indulged in any form of political activity.

10 YEARS AGO

A fire in the Geography department destroyed between two and three thousand maps and both the police and "Beaver" reports believe the destruction to have been caused deliberately. The action "harmed millions throughout the world, chiefly those in under-developed countries" and the damage was made more horrifying with the disclosure that the maps were chiefly the work of students and voluntary workers.

As well as particularly heavy features on cosmology, the CIA and a seven-thousand word epic on the old library comes a report that the LSE is to receive an £89,000 research grant. The Higher Education Research Unit was given over £69,000 for a three year study on the probably accurately highlights the next decade's expected difficulties in the allocation of "resources of manpower, finance and buildings." Only now exactly a decade later, can we determine how well the money has been spent.

5 YEARS AGO

With regard to the five-year-old headline "Shop Closed, Bar Reeling" and reports of the £19,800 loss made by the LSE catering outlets in the financial year 1974-75, today's news of the closure of the Robinson Room seems relatively insignificant. The Union shop, with an expected loss of over £600 in the first term, was to remain closed for the remainder of the academic year, and in the bar "massed drinkers" voted to keep the mark-up on cost price at 35% (as opposed to the normal 45%)—and this despite a reduction in last term's profit from £850 to £100.

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NOT JUST ANOTHER CUT

MEDICINE UNDER THE KNIFE

THE big question surrounding the Flowers report appears to be "Why?" The measure is not an education cut as such. In fact, it is not designed to save any money at all, operating under the assumption that.

"The total funding of medical and dental education in the University (of London) will not be reduced as a direct consequence of any recommendations by the working party."

So being purely a rationalization measure it is much harder to justify, and, concomitantly, more difficult to criticize.

The Flowers Committee began work in March 1979 having been set up, quite simply, to see if there was any way medical education could be rationalized without reducing academic standards. Rationalization has become necessary, so the report argues, because of a combination of various factors: the increasing trend toward specialization in medicine; the reduction in financial provision to the University; the increasing proportion of the University's funds absorbed by medicine; the reorganization of the health service in 1974; and most important of all, because of the demographic predictions of a report by the London Health Planning Consortium (LHPC).

Acute provision

The LHPC's report "Acute Hospital Services in London" described how London's population has fallen from 8.5m during world war two to its present level of 7m. This means that there are fewer acutely ill people in hospital in London and, to put it bluntly, the medical student relies on having a wide and readily available supply of acute patients in his or her clinical training. The Flowers report, which was very nearly a direct consequence of the LHPC document, is about making better use of clinical facilities and by that is meant acute beds.

The LHPC, what's more, predict a continuation of this trend to the point where, in ten years time, the London teaching districts will have to have lost 2,300 beds. In Appendix 2 of Flowers there are figures which show that, in every teaching district and almost every branch of medicine, the projected 1988 bed requirement will have shrunk well below the current level of provision of beds for the purposes of clinical medical education.

As has been well publicized, Flowers seeks to rectify this situation by bringing together a

larger number of medical students in a smaller number of institutions each of which will have available a complete range of clinical specialities including a dental unit. London's present 34 medical schools will be reduced to six—evidently a radical reorganization, affecting not only the education of medical students but also the progress of medical research. There are many specific arguments surrounding the various institutions which will be closed, marked or expanded and it is impossible to go into all of them. However, here is a brief selection of the general issues. First, research.

Reviving the brain

One of the medical schools which Flowers recommends closing is the Westminster, where operate several eminent research teams. The report says nothing about what should happen to them. An unnamed researcher is quoted in the New Scientist of 6th March as saying that many people engaged in medical research might simply pack up and leave for the US or Canada as a direct result of Flowers.

It seems that most academics are worried about the consequences for research. In the teacher/student ratios are likely revamped postgrad schools, to fall; research funds will diminish as the individuals to whom grants are made leave; and work may be disrupted in battles over redundancy terms for research staff made surplus by the report. But it is also fairly obvious that, given that medical research is organized around medical schools, any alteration to the present system will cause disruption and that unless one holds that medical schools are wholly inviolate there must come a point at which the provision to society of ordinary doctors takes precedence over the advancement of the science itself. It is not enough simply to accuse Flowers of "academic vandalism." The lack of efficacy of his measures must be established as well.



(St. Thomas' Hospital: due for merger)

Another important issue behind both the Flowers report and a second LHPC report, "Towards A Balance," is deciding which specialities need to be represented in each teaching district. With only six medical schools it is easier to have a wider range of specialities available. Study groups set up by the LHPC to look into each speciality individually feel that it is better to have specialist centres within big teaching hospitals rather than spread about through the regions. To this end, for instance, they propose moving the famous cardiac surgery unit at Harefield Hospital, Middlesex, to Charing Cross Hospital in Fulham. Their conclusion lends weight to the Flowers argument.

"We believe that further substantial academic development is required in London if its full academic potential is to be realized. In the present financial circumstances we do not believe that this could come about if there remained a large number of individual, but small schools... Many (of them) lack Chairs which the syllabus indicates they should have and only by bringing these schools together into a smaller number of larger units can the necessary senior teaching be made available to all of them."

But of course the trend has just begun to turn away from conglomeration, as recent plans to sell off the more profitable parts of British Leyland and the division of the Post Office evidence. There is certainly no precedent in Britain for assuming that a big institution is necessarily more efficient than a small one. Indeed, under a Conservative administration one would expect the emphasis to be on exactly the qualities of individual excellence that London medical schools like the Westminster, up for closure under Flowers, represent. And it was

a point raised by Harold Ellis in the British Medical Journal of 8th March 1980 which suggested that Flowers might be guilty of what Professor H. R. V. Arnstein of Kings College calls "a dogmatic adherence" to the idea that clinical and pre-clinical teaching should take place on the same site:

("The Westminster) is one of the most cost-effective medical schools in the country and requires less in total expenditure than the fuel bills of some of the new larger skyscraper medical schools."

Both Westminster and Kings cite cost-effectiveness as well as academic excellence in their defence, thus suggesting that what is behind the Flowers report is a desire to make it easier (at some point in the future) for the government to spend less money on medical education by centralizing it now.

Law, medicine and ethics

Flowers would close the pre-clinical medical department at Kings, just across the Strand from the LSE, and with it, according to David Travers, president of the disaffiliated Kings Union, would go the UK's only Centre for Law, Medicine and Ethics. The Centre is important, says Travers, because it is the only place in Britain where trainee doctors get a chance to debate the ethical issues with which medicine is increasingly concerned (test-tube babies, euthanasia, certification of death, etc), with lawyers and theologians. This may seem a somewhat luxurious facility, like the Kings argument that their multi-faculty institution is worth more than any degree of efficiency achieved by

its abolition, but unless one is prepared to abandon entirely the idea that education is valuable in its own right it is precisely colleges like Kings, providing a unique combination of disciplines, that need to be maintained.

The Union at Kings have produced a well argued document, entitled "London Medical Education—An Alternative Framework," which sets out their arguments in detail. The final Appendix of their report is a letter from an American, trained as a doctor in Britain, pointing out that the big medical school has been popular in the US for some time and, in his opinion, has solved none of the problems of medical education there.

Is London dead?

Finally, a word might be said about the premise on which Flowers is based, namely that the population of London, and consequently the demand for medical services, is irrevocably in decline. Nowhere in Flowers is notice taken of attempts to revitalize the city centre, with which he is particularly concerned, by the Conservative administration; nor does he note recent moves back into the city centre by middle class suburbanites in the US because of increasing travel costs, a development very likely to be reproduced in Britain if it is not already underway. Flowers accepts the inevitability of population decline and lower proportional education spending as if they were laws of nature. The idea that health spending, not to speak of the capital, might one day revive does not seem to have occurred to him.

Alex Wynter

SEASIDE SPECIAL

Government gunned



Briefly in Blackpool

CONFERENCE ELEVATION

ALAS, this is the last time that a "Beaver" correspondent will be able to enthuse about the events in Blackpool for the simple reason that the Conference is moving to Margate in December. This move may make the Bristol University delegation more comfortable as Margate is considerably closer to London than is Blackpool. The unfortunate souls became stuck in the lift at the Claremont Hotel and the management refused to call the fire brigade in case they damaged the lift, and proposed to summon the lift engineer. The slight problem was that he lived in London and would take seven hours to arrive. The further agonies of the Bristol Six were spared, however, when National President Trevor Phillips demanded the return of his delegates, and the Blackpool conflagration prevention officers were duly summoned.

CONFERENCE DELEGATION

Reliable sources indicate that it was not only the Claremont which suffered devastation in the wake of the NUS Conference. The Craig-Y-Don was unfortunate to play host to the LSE delegation — though not your faithful correspondent — and found itself one door less after the visit. One evening, Mr Kirby, ably assisted by Mr Gallant, tried to gain admittance to their bedrooms and, amazingly, the door disintegrated before their very eyes. One would never believe it...

CONFERENCE SURPRISED

If the hotel was surprised by Mr Kirby and Mr Gallant, Mr Cole truly astonished those of us who have become accustomed to his oratorical performances. The hands, which we have been

used to see moving in the gestures beloved of a well-known tendency, remained securely anchored to the rostrum as if he had used some of the superglue advertised on the box. The rostrum moved up and down, creaking at its foundations, as it strove to remain fixed to the floor.

CONFERENCE UNITES

All avid readers of this column (when it is based in London) will be aware that there has been a little internal strife within the Tory faithful at LSE. Whatever the troubles here in the Metropolis, though, the tonic of a week in Blackpool can mend right wing rifts. Not only was Mr Gallant seen playing pool with Mr Devlin, the gentleman who moved the unsuccessful motion of no confidence in him, but that same Mr Gallant was also seen to re-establish his Tory credentials by applauding vigorously several delegates who praised the government's policies and called for a second term of office for Mrs Thatcher. One wonders what the FCS will do after the election for Vice-Chairman of that body, contested by the said Mr Devlin and Ms Archbold: Conference is only twice a year.

CONFERENCE MEETINGS

One has the opportunity of meeting so many old friends at Conference — and I even met Jeff Stanyforth in the bar on the first night. Other visitors from LSE were also sighted, but the Conference was for once without the oratorical powers of Mr Ingram. On returning to the Capital, though, one found that he had gained a position with that well-known firm of Liberals, Saatchi and Saatchi. Is this yet another step on the road to Ingram domination?

K.H.

THE message to come from the National President, Trevor Phillips, in his opening speech to the Conference on Monday evening, 14th April, was that N.U.S. was facing a time of unparalleled difficulties due to the financial position. At the December Conference, delegates had failed to agree on a new subscriptions scheme, but the position was alleviated in the Winter Gardens two weeks ago when a holding scheme was agreed. Finance Committee inserted a clause that this system is not practicable for more than three years, leaving unresolved the question of equal burdens being borne or otherwise by different constituent members of the National Union. In any case, the uncertainty surrounding the Government's proposals to change the whole method of student union financing makes planning beyond the immediate future very difficult indeed.

The substantive which was accepted sets out a scheme based on marginal percentages, with fixed expenditure being taken into account. In order to try and avoid the problems of this year, when the procedural means of gaining a subscriptions scheme had produced many difficulties, the constitution has been changed to allow a change in the subscriptions scheme if approved by one conference rather than by the two needed at the moment. This amendment itself, though, will have to be ratified in December if it is to take effect.

The Government's proposals for student union financing were roundly condemned as "nonsense", and opposition was pledged to the scheme whereby unions would have to fight

academic departments for money from the one pool. Conference also reaffirmed its belief in automatic membership. Whilst the Executive supported the main motion, it also had to accept a criticism of its own failure to do enough to oppose the proposals. In summing on Amendment One, which criticised the Executive for lack of constructive opposition, Becky Bryan of L.S.E. said that Rhodes Boyson was a spectre haunting education, and that the N.U.S. leadership had been "wet, complacent and acquiescent". Delegates also passed Amendment Five, which read simply:—

Conference believes—

- (1) Rhodes Boyson hates students;
- (2) That, in the words of John Cooper Clarke, if work was any good, the rich'd do it.

The Government was also condemned for its economic policy, the main motion calling for an increase in public expenditure, a 35-hour week, nationalisation of the banks, insurance companies and finance houses, selective import controls and nationalisation of the construction industry. Simon Cole summated on a Militant amendment calling for guaranteed employment for all school-leavers, an immediate grant of £2,000 and £20 a week for 16-18 year olds undergoing full-time education, amongst other things. He claimed that these were the demands around which the people could mobilise, but the amendment was defeated. Accepted, however, was an amendment from Manchester University which also expressed opposition to rent increases. The substantive was eventually carried on a card vote by 219,740 to 218,743, a majority of 957.

Stupid substantive

BESIDES expressing opposition to a whole range of government policies, the N.U.S. Easter Conference also passed an important priorities motion which identified four main objects of the National Union of Students.

Firstly, and most importantly, the motion said, it was the role of N.U.S. to represent students on matters of direct common concern. Secondly, the work of the Constituent Members must be co-ordinated. Thirdly, the N.U.S. can provide services to its members, especially in the commercial sphere. Fourthly, the Union is a campaigning body on general matters of concern. This last function is, in the horrible jargon which seems to have arisen out of the members of Endsleigh Street campaigns, to be "deprioritised" (ugh!) Conference Believes 7 states "that the function of N.U.S. is primarily a protective one and secondly a promotional one."

In his Presidential address, Mr Phillips referred to the need to live within the income avail-

able, which will decline by 5% as a result of the interim subscription system. What was illogical was the passing of the priorities motion after the development plan — which said virtually the same things—had been rejected. Helen Connor claimed that the reason for this apparent contradiction was that delegates thought that they had not been consulted adequately but, after having made the protest, they saw the sense of the priorities motion. Perhaps the comment of Anna Soubry has more appeal, though, "Conference is stupid."

Stupid or otherwise, the Conference was dogged by the National Union of Iraqi Students, whose members were handing out leaflets and, it was claimed, intimidating other Iraqis. Mr Phillips was reluctant to remove the credentials of delegates or visitors who were students, a position he maintained after an unofficial collection had been taken following guest speakers from Armagh women's

gaol and relatives of prisoners in H block. There was confusion over whether or not the Executive had agreed to hold a meeting to discuss Northern Ireland, some members claiming they were not told of any such meeting. Even so, Andy Pearmain opposed the collection and the move to hold it was defeated. Nevertheless, a collection was held, the Chairman being powerless to prevent it.

The following day, the main motion—an emergency motion condemning the violation of human rights in Armagh Prison—was carried.

Amendments calling for special category status for the I.R.A. and for Troops Out were defeated. Helen Fawcett summated for the main motion and received a partial standing ovation for a speech which screamed that the motion was not pledging support for the I.R.A.

Guest speakers received varied receptions. The speaker from Zimbabwe—Mr. Mugabe's nephew—received a standing ovation (even, briefly, from Anna Soubry) and was heard in silence. The Mayor of Blackpool, on the other hand, faced an exodus from the Conference floor to the balcony, from where chants rained in profusion. Mr. Kirby joined the happy throng upstairs, but Mr. Maharaj was seen to be listening intently.

My best wishes go to the Mayor of Margate, where Conference moves in December.

Conference quotes

"Oh, I'm wet."—Anna Soubry (admittedly after Mr Aaronovitch had thrown a jug of cold water over her on the last morning of conference).

"Conference is stupid."—Anna Soubry.

"I think this chair is breaking."—Fiona Mactaggart.

"The Left Alliance weren't always a bunch of Tory wankers."—Tim Devlin.

"God, I hate students."—Helen Fawcett.

THE LONDON ARTS

RUDE WHITE RIOT

"Turning rebellion into money."

The Clash — "White Man in Hammersmith Palais"

"You think it's funny . . ."

HAD "Rude Boy" been entitled "The Clash—1979-80", the film might well have received half of its box-office takings, been seen by few who weren't already converted Clash fans and been added to the exhaustive catalogue of cult, late-night and 'B' movies.

As it is, the directors, Jack Hazan and David Mingay, wrap an extremely thin, hackneyed story-line around 1½ hours of concert and studio footage and the film receives rave reviews, becoming classed as one of the best British films to have emerged for many years. A rebellious rock film it may be, but a chilling epitaph for the youth culture of the late 'seventies it is not.

Against a backdrop of fascist marches, police surveillance, a Tory election campaign and growing economic depression, Ray, the Rude Boy of the title, joins the Clash as a roadie. He sees the move as the only escape from the monotonous dole-queue existence portrayed in so many of their songs. The film charts his relationship with a band of

virtually self-confessed hypocrites, musically impressive but politically naive, who unflinchingly claim to be a "garage-band" although signed to CBS, and who proudly sport Red Brigade T-shirts at a critical Rock Against Racism gig.

Political comment is limited to embarrassing images of "men riding around in big black cars" and much of the script is stilted, forced and often pretentious. Somehow, despite all the political blunders, the Clash still survive as a magnificent band on film.

They're certainly not proficient actors although in comparison with Ray Gange's stumbling performance as the Rude Boy they emerge as the real stars of the film in terms of both acting and musical ability.

There can be little doubt as to why the Clash didn't want Rude Boy released: there's nothing in the film that they hadn't said on their first album some three years ago. More to the point, it's pretty hard to dance in the cinema.

Geoff S. Dremlain

MOIST MOVIE

HOW could *Kramer vs. Kramer* have so overshadowed *Apocalypse Now* at the Academy Awards? There are political reasons (Copolla is not loved by the big Hollywood production companies), but no doubt the judges were blinded by the sentimentality that makes the film the popular success it was.

We had the feeling of being lowered into a warm whirlpool bath of emotion and clinically removed at the end. There is nothing fresh about the screenplay or cinematography; the subject of a small child caught between separated parents simply carries you through on a wave of glandular secretion.

The film starts with Mrs Kramer (Meryl Streep) leaving her husband (Dustin Hoffman) and little boy (Justin Henry) in order to "develop her full potential as a human being", i.e. go to California and join a therapy group.

Most of what follows portrays the growing symbiosis of father and son, underlined by a recurring sequence: Billy wakes up and walks sleepy-eyed to the loo to make a short little tinkle, then Daddy follows with his more substantial stream.

After a few months Mommy (suddenly a complete human being) returns to New York and demands custody of Billy. Her original reasons for leaving were so underplayed that this reappearance to snatch the child away is not welcomed by the audience.

A Perry Mason style trial ensues, and Mrs Kramer wins the case. The audience starts sniffing here; they want to see Justin Henry stay with Dustin Hoffman, because they're so cute together. Never fear: on the morning Mrs Kramer is due to collect Billy, she decides to throw the legal fees to the wind and let him stay with his father. And the warm bath is over.

Justin Henry is the most precocious child actor since Tatum O'Neill, but sometimes he's a little too much in control of his character. For example, when Daddy's secretary spends the night and meets Billy on the way to the loo, she stands speechless, clutching for fig-leaves, but Billy coolly asks her whether she likes fried chicken.

Dustin Hoffman may be the only reason for going to see this film: for once he loses that iron determination not to smile and becomes positively endearing in his scenes with Justin Henry.

As in *The Deer Hunter*, Meryl Streep's delicacy occasionally slips into insipidness but, to be fair, she makes the best of a sketchily-conceived character.

Sarah Butterfield
William Shebar



All cross garter'd

THIS is, simply, a very good performance. After the rather qualified success of the "Greeks" trilogy, the RSC have returned to what they do best: producing clear and emphatic productions of Shakespeare which link the professional thoroughness of a highly accomplished cast to the imaginative brilliance of Terry Hands and John Napier.

Napier's set on this occasion is strongly reminiscent of the recent production of "Measure for Measure": black and stark, a device that concentrates attention on the actors, and places on them the onus for generating the warmth and movement of the play. The only props of any substance are a few bare trees, arranged in a short avenue running back the entire

depth of the stage. This, together with the device of having most of the characters entering from the rear of the stage, adds a new dimension that breaks the visual monotony of conventional left-to-right West End productions.

The cast are so uniformly good that there is very little choosing between them; the exception to this is Cherie Lunghi's Viola, a marvellously deft and clear performance, moving attentively from one desperate lover to another, self-controlled enough to carry on two awkward deceptions at once, but easily moved to tears by the taunting accusations of Aguecheek and Sir Toby.

It is arguable that the broad, farcical treatment of the comic sub-

THREADS

IF the most important criterion in watching a play is complete, detailed comprehension, then *THREADS* by John Byrne fails disastrously. To the untrained ear, almost a third of the broad Scottish dialogue is undecipherable. Yet the overall picture is so vivid and the text so flowing that the natural atmosphere becomes tantamount and detail almost insignificant.

A sequel to the highly acclaimed *Slab Boys*, we see the events at an annual works dinner and dance, first from the ladies' and gents' cloakrooms and in the second half from the upstairs balcony. While not strictly auto-biographical, the dramatist writes cleverly about characters he knew from his own experience in the dying or "slab" room of a Paisley carpet manufacturer, and all are strong, if hackneyed, comic stereotypes.

The highlight of the social calendar, the dance pinpoints amusing personality clashes and slow, reflective moments of remorse, sexual rejection and self-pity. Set in 1957, the prospects for advancement are negligible, the hope of finding alternative occupation almost impossible. At no time does the often hilarious comedy get out of hand; all the characters demand the audience's sympathy throughout the course of the evening.

"Threads" definitely carries bitter, semi-autobiographical, social comment in the face of a highly enjoyable evening, and is proof once again that the best comedies are always more than trivial anarchic romps.

Geoff S. Dremlain

plot clashes too strongly with the delicate poetry of the principal love story, but you can only put up with so much refined word-play at one sitting, and John Woodvine's demonic, ludicrous Malvolio is a good antidote. Perhaps there is a danger that the success of the comedy will swamp the main plot and upset the equilibrium of the play, but any audience is probably too busy laughing to worry about the dramatic balance of the plot.

Simon James



The Norsemen cometh

ONE approaches the Viking Exhibition at the British Museum with the express intention of enjoying it. The recent exposure in the press and in the BBC programme presented by the ubiquitous Magnus Magnusson, has been more than enough to whet the historical appetite. One leaves the display feeling, if not ecstatic, then certainly fulfilled.

The impressive array of artefacts are comprehensively representative of the period, ranging from a thousand year old doodle to a complete, reconstructed Viking dwelling. The development of their art is well delineated and is astutely mirrored throughout the exhibi-

tion in the growth of Christianity.

Indeed, the main emphasis of the exhibition is on the hitherto little-known craftsmanship of the Nordic peoples. Traditionally thought of as ruthless barbarians, the Vikings produced some extraordinarily skilful metal, stone, and wood-work. There is even a full scale replica of a beautifully carved church entrance, sensual in its detail, which acts as the consummate example of Viking craft.

The almost paradoxical nature of their art, combining heavy, even clumsy lines, with fine, delicate patterns creates a visual discord, peculiarly plea-

asurable to the eye. The gradual transition towards intricacy is reflected tangibly in the exhibition with examples of all the various styles clearly marked on display.

This greater understanding of Viking culture is carefully nurtured by the presentation of the artefacts. The exhibition progresses chronologically with both the lighting and the geometry of the layout conducive to intimacy and clarity. It's not a blockbuster, jam-packed with overwhelming stimuli like the recent Post-Impressionism display at the Royal Academy, but rather a carefully prepared exposition imbued with informed authority.

Eden Riche

IT is an interesting fact that Steven Spielberg's new film "1941" needed not only the considerable talents of Mr Spielberg himself in the process of direction, but also those of three assistants. My explanation of this situation is as follows,—

One day a director, who, having in his previous efforts such as "Duel", "Jaws" and "Close Encounters of the Third Kind", achieved a high degree of technical and popular, if not artistic acclaim, decided to spend lots of money making a very silly film. The result is a trite, slapstick cartoon feature, except that it uses real people with real places, and pays no respect to time-honoured expendables such as continuity, theme, or sense.

Notionally based on California's reaction to the Pearl Harbour attack, the film asthmatically lumbers along like Digger Barnes in a drunken rage, collapsing from one scene of debauched chaos to another. There is the inexplicably sole Japanese submarine on a mysterious mission off the coast of California. On board is the equally incongruous German naval commander played with Transylvanian embarrassment by Christopher Lee. There is the randy Air Force captain determined to deflower the aeroplane-fixated nymphomaniac. There is even a grisly bear-type character who, having purloined a fighter plane, proceeds to "impress" the rest of the cast with crass vulgarity and tortuous monotony.

Most of the "action" is captured through finely

1941 and all that..

filtered atmospheric lenses but, as far as quality goes, that's about it. From the initial narcissistic plagiarism of "Jaws", which is now so hackneyed it's no longer in the East End, to the "climactic" collapse of the hysteria-crazed West Coast family's house, one is bombarded with hoary old chestnuts. Scenes of mindless and naively simplistic violence range from a supposedly hilarious insinuated rape, to the kind of saloon-bar devastation normally associated with fifth-rate Westerns. The film imbues one with a great sense of wonderment: you wonder how it could have been made at all.

Now then; why the three assistant directors? While Mr Spielberg was extravagantly committing one of the least enjoyable experiences in the history of the cinema to celluloid, most of his cast, by now either limber or dead, were kept on the set with the threat of bullwhips held in the hands of—yes, the three assistant directors. No doubt they would have sympathised with the cry of "Hear, hear" that emanated from the back of the Leicester Square Theatre in response to a line from the film, "We've been through a lot." Audience participation. Steven Spielberg would have loved it.

Eden Riche

Bad Timing by Roeg

BAD TIMING concerns the investigation — by Harvey Keitel as a police detective — of the circumstances of a young American woman's suicide attempt, in Vienna. While the woman, Milena (Theresa Russell) is being stomach-pumped, defibrillated and tubed, the detective interviews Milena's unco-operative lover, an American research psychoanalyst called Alex Linden, played by Art Garfunkel, and ponders on Linden's involvement in the woman's suicide. During the interrogation, flashbacks illustrate the essential episodes in the relationship between Linden and Milena.

Finally the detective deduces that Linden has committed a crime (the nature of which I will not disclose) and with mounting emotion in an attempt to make Linden identify with him, is edging him towards a psychoanalysis-like confession in Milena's disordered room. The news comes, through the agency of Milena's estranged husband, a Czech security officer (Denholm Elliott) that Milena will recover, the moment is lost and a confession irrelevant.

This is a very rich, complex film, full of strong imagery. The mixing of scenes on the operating table with those of Dr Linden's interrogation by the Detective Netusil and the flashbacks that provide the body of the film, gives rise to some very fast editing, as when the jerks of Milena's electro-shocked body and the cutting of her throat in the very realistic hospital scene alternate with shots of Linden and her making love.

The theme of the film seems to be two-fold: The first is the failure of passion or understanding alone, without the other, to maintain a relationship. Linden's relations with the three other protagonists, Milena, her husband and the detective, illustrate both this theme (the detective seeks both understanding and passion, in his empathy, but Linden cannot con-

nect) and the second, that of observation.

The jobs of Netusil and Linden are about observation, the psychoanalyst illustrates his lecturing with slides of baby and parents as spy and spied upon observers, and he does part-time work for the CIA as psycho-profiler of possible targets for recruitment. Milena's husband is some kind of spy, Linden spies on Milena as she meets her friends and lovers in cafes and bars, and paintings and photographs play an important part in the film. The film itself is voyeuristic. Roeg says that observation of one another is crucial to the development of a relationship, since it provides nearly all the information we have to go on, and in "Bad Timing" observation fails to lead to understanding. The lack of clarity in this exposition reflects the failure of this reviewer to understand the film fully. Whether this is the fault of the viewer cannot be determined, but Philip French does recommend a second viewing of a film he dubs "of the very first rank."

Those reviewers who have praised this film so heavily expound eloquently and lovingly on the technical mastery of "Bad Timing", but they have perhaps forgotten the main requirement in the film medium: to entertain. What tension there may have been in the unravelling of the mystery of Milena's suicide attempt and the events around it, essentially concerned with Linden's character, is lost by a reviewer's revelation of the complete story. This is a sophisticated, intelligent example of the cinematographer's art and the director's skills, beautifully staged in Vienna. One could spend many viewings picking up all the references, like reading "The Wasteland", but it is, unfortunately, an unmoving and unenjoyable film containing events that are clearly important to the characters but which do not involve the audience.

by Roddy Hallifax

Who is Tom Conti anyway?

IN a rich textured Glaswegian accent, Tom Conti is telling a joke:—

"A story is told about the playwright Arthur Miller speaking to a newspaper vendor on the corner of New York's Fifth Avenue:

"How's business, Abe?"
 "Oh, not too bad, Arthur, how's yourself?"
 "Oh, I'm bearing up, thanks."
 "What are you doing now, Arthur?"

"Oh, just writing, Abe, you know, the same old stuff."

"Journalism is that, Arthur?"

"No, you know, just writing."

"Books, Arthur?"

"No, you know, just writing

... plays mostly."

"Oh... Arthur MILLER!"

The story goes down well during an informal question-and-answer session Mr Conti has agreed to give to a Jewish youth group in West Hampstead. "I like that one," he continues, "it shows you can't take any aspect of success for granted—I'm only as good as my next script."

Tom Conti's own public acclaim sprang largely from the dramatisation of Frederick Raphael's critical view of the lives of a group of Cambridge graduates in the 'Glittering Prizes'. In a brief interview with Beaver

he spoke first about his early career and slow rise to success.

"If anybody would have told me when I was ten that I was to become an actor, I probably would have laughed—if anything I wanted to become a director. I only took up acting because they were short of people at the university dramatic society and I've been in an awful lot of tedious productions since then. I don't really like to think of all the early disasters.

"There were many plays which seemed interesting at first reading and then turned out to be crashing bores to perform—Don Juan at the Hampstead Theatre was one of those—and there were many good plays which suffered from poor directing—Savages at the National fell into that category. The thing about the Glittering Prizes was that it was such an accurately written piece, not in the sense of detail, but in the mood and feel of academic life in the 'fifties that it managed to evoke, and above all it was an exciting piece to do."

"Whose Life Is it Anyway?" was a rather surprising success as far as its subject-matter was concerned, and Beaver asked him what he thought was the great attraction of a play deal-

ing with the normally controversial and depressing topic of euthanasia.

"I don't think that nowadays many theatre-goers who pay £6 for a good seat merely wish to see trivia on the stage. Few people can really afford to go to the theatre for the sake of it. The text of the play is usually vital; most of the audience like to go home thinking about what they've seen—the play itself has to be fairly 'intelligent' to succeed. That's why 'Whose Life' was so well received; it was good entertainment but it was also more than that. It got people thinking and it swayed people's views.

"The play would have been a fairly overpowering occasion if there had been no humorous balance—no-one wants to listen to a man moaning about his life of hardship, pleading for the switches of the life support machine to be turned off, if it wasn't for the interspersal of a few good jokes.

Earlier he had spoken out strongly against the critics, and Beaver asked him whether he faithfully believed that the critics hindered rather than helped the British theatre.

"I think that if a producer puts £100,000 behind a show he obviously thinks it should be

seen, and the public shouldn't be unduly influenced by a man who gets free seats in the stalls to do a job.

"Besides, the audience want to know whether a play is worthwhile seeing, not whether the leading actress wore blue sequins on a white dress, or what the props were like. I think that all the first-night audience ought to be asked afterwards is whether they thought the play was "marvellous", "fairly enjoyable", "worth the money" or "poor" depending

on their own personal views. These results ought to be correlated and printed in the papers the following morning. It would certainly be far more representative than one man's introverted opinions."

Tom Conti is currently directing "Before the Party" at the Queen's Theatre. He can be seen in a new Neil Simon musical, "They're Playing My Song", based on the life of songwriter Marvin Hamlisch, which opens in the West End in just over two months.

ARTHUR STORY



Tom Conti in the Devil's Disciple.

LONDON HOUSING

By EWAN NEILSON

TOWARDS the end of the academic year, many students begin to move out of London and those remaining have to start worrying about accommodation for the next year. By the middle of September much of the best accommodation has been swallowed up, and for the late returning student there is little hope of finding a comfortable, cheap and accessible room. It is at this time of year with long-term lets soon available that a reappraisal of the problem might help students still new to the game.

The frequented haunts of the accommodation hunters has usually been the LSE or ULU accommodation visits to numerous and expensive agencies or a 10 am dash for the "Evening Standard" outside Holborn tube station.

Sex film

A NEW film called "Boys and Girls Together" is very basically about the sexual adventures of a character called Don, supposedly an American student at the LSE. The musical background to this "rock-bottom sexploiter, so parched of production values that it makes others of its kind look positively opulent" (Richard Combs), is provided by someone archly calling himself Cliff (sic) Richard.

Expect to see strangers walking around the LSE asking where the action is.

"GROPER"

The first two haunts are helpful but overworked with little to offer at the height of the campaigning season, namely September and the beginning of October. Occasionally an agency like Jenny Jones will be useful, but most agencies have expensive fees which amount to two weeks' rent and VAT, then a month's deposit and finally a month's rent in advance. Last July I remember four of us rented a house and our first cheque to Star Agency was just over £600. The next few months were ruined by sensational financial difficulties!

Even the lucky-dip, the "Evening Standard's" Accommodation to Let section, is liberally endowed with con-agencies, slum dwellings, and questionable landlords. There is, however, the occasional genuine offer but most of these have disappeared

before the student can buy a copy. It is rumoured that the printers run their own agency and have disposed of many genuine offers before the paper is allowed off the press. Local newspapers, weeklies and advertisements in shop windows are also tried.

There is also a second side to the problem. For those looking in groups there is the difficulty of who shares with whom and for how much. The question of who looks where, and in whose name the property is held and finally who is wishing to take on the ultimate responsibility for the running of the property may break friendships and destroy good ideas.

Then for those looking individually there is the sheer loneliness of maintaining oneself and living by oneself in one's own company. A bed-sit or a room with a family may be cheap and comfortable but it is often a poor substitute for a shared flat.

The twofold problem of trying to find accommodation and having to compromise on what is necessary, may last for a few days or a number of weeks. While some relish the prospect

of adventure, cut-throat competition and laissez-faire jangle-mongering, many more would prefer a simpler situation.

One solution would be a housing co-operative. By this I mean an agency inside the LSE working as part of the LSE administration or Union, or even the LSE accommodation office working through an external agency established to take on houses on short lets and rent them to individuals or groups of students. Many houses on the market which have short lets or leases are too expensive for a group of students to handle by themselves. An agency or bureau could locate property from the GLC or private section and then organise students looking for accommodation into co-operatives. The ultimate responsibility—demanding rent, handling a contract or agreement with a landlord and organising the payment of a deposit—would belong to the agency.

Students for their part would run and maintain the house without the risks of responsibility and heavy agency fees, though a minimal charge might be made to self-finance the scheme. This scheme could overcome the difficulties British

students have in being refused accommodation because landlords are afraid of the rights they can acquire while foreign students would not face the insecurity of knowing they could be evicted at short notice. Lastly and probably most important, a co-operative might overcome other problems of social welfare, isolation, loneliness and insecurity.

An "Observer" report of 13th January 1980 pointed out that there will be a good deal more rented property on the market in 1980 and at greatly reduced rents. Despite this, individual students may be facing the same problems of high rentals and bad accommodation if they plunge into the market by themselves. A scheme of this nature would need little organisation and administrative expense, and may go a long way to solving a perennial problem. Such schemes have been tried in the past. QMC has at present a short-term let on council homes at Millwall Dock and rents them to students.

All schemes need money and staff, but the Union or the LSE administration, or both, may consider it worthwhile at such an auspicious time to tackle an old problem with new ideas.

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Find as many towns hidden in the letter box below as you can and write them in the space alongside. Complete the tie breaker and bring your entry form down to our new TRANSALPINO SHOP at 214 Shaftesbury Avenue. As long as you have found at least ten towns and completed the form you collect your free Mr. Pizzaman pizza and stand a chance of winning two free tickets to anywhere served by Transalpino. The only rules are that you must be under 26 years of age and that the towns all appear in the Transalpino Summer Fares brochure. If they do not they will not count.

Judging will be based on the most towns found and, if necessary, on the most original slogan.

Prizes are two free tickets for people under 26 to anywhere served by Transalpino, 10 x £5.00 vouchers against the next tickets you purchase from us and one bottle of wine each for the forty runners-up.

Competition closes 14th May, 1980. The 52 winners will be announced in the 21.05, 1980 issue of Pi.

LIST THE TOWNS YOU FIND

lyonszakdlcfcgokyl	farmhuwjistovilee
cvacmadusseldorfb	niloostendehcsorr
peziwhombiarritzh	amfrankfurtoderoi
anesdafqfyuwsuod	iebrunquektoano
otpigrtavhkiebhkp	nnotedunkerquepaz
midsxphhidsejlode	atmpnkofjoepcfaka
emesrdbrecbnaharh	tedwupertaljzjbn
nicalaishnvulmene	auxmylddzicnrzast
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Tie Breaker (complete in not more than ten words)
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Now you've completed it, bring it down to Transalpino, 214 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, WC2 and collect a Mr. Pizzaman pizza.

ALBANIAN HOLIDAY

FOR those world weary travellers amongst you who've done America by Greyhound, Europe on a Railcard and even overland to the Antipodes, why not try the one place where's there's a difference — Albania?

To begin with there's none of that hassle over getting your visa (as for the USA) because they don't issue them. However, the Consul General, who works as a short-order chef in the Wimpy Bar in Frith Street, Soho (just up from Ronny Scott's), was very amenable to the fifteen quid which I slipped him and he assured me that this traditional form of gratitude would ensure a successful visit to Albania. He also gave me a letter of introduction to his brother-in-law, the Commissar of Police, and another to a house called "Madame Xosha's" which, he assured me, was only visited by the cadres — who are mostly his relations — and a few friends.

I travelled overland to Yugoslavia and found the customs point easily recognizable by the Berlin-style wall, anti-tank emplacements and heavily armed guards. As you may gather, the letter of introduction was invaluable, as was the fiver which I slipped the officer in charge who, in his delight at meeting a true western son of the revolution (LSE is a popular term of abuse in some countries) opened a bottle of Albanian vodka — reminiscent of my grandmother's embalming fluid — and we sang revolutionary

songs together. I had difficulty explaining that "Red is the colour, football is the game" was not about the armed struggle and the workers' conflict.

I discovered that Albania is an idyll: no tourists, no dirty MacDonalds wrappers and coke cans littering the street nor any of that disgusting decadence that one associates with the Costas and Majorca, ie. sun, sand and sex. Sun there was plenty of, and sand also, which was mostly in the fields and giving the peasants a hard time. But they seemed to enjoy it and would happily go on to a fourteen or fifteen hour day. When I suggested that this was quite hard they first looked over their shoulders and told me not to be naive. I surmised that they had evidently reached a higher plane than the 35 hour week and for them working is all the joy and relaxation they need. As for sex they believe it is a waste of revolutionary zeal, so every time they feel like having it off they go and plough a field instead.

When I finally reached the capital (I'd been hitching rides on goat carts this being a stop goat economy) I was warmly received by the Commissar for Police who kindly took care of my travellers cheques and passport. We went to Madame Xosha's (who is his sister) and I was introduced to his niece who he said was twelve years old but looked more like his great aunt. Anyway, we enjoyed a bottle of sparkling turnip wine, which reminded me of a well known sparkling

French wine which has been passed through a urinal a few times, and again sang some of our favourite revolutionary songs, including the anthem of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist Leninist), "The Party is the Most Precious Thing", which brought tears to our eyes.

When I awoke the next morning I found that I was staying in the Lubyanka-style country residence of the Commissar, which he assured me was safe from nuclear attack. This was a great relief to me as I was most concerned about the warmongering demagogical leaders in the US, USSR, China, GB, Tunisia, Sardinia, Isle of Wight, Shetlands, etc., etc. After a few days I began to develop the old wanderlust but my host was most insistent that I stay. So, fearful of offending such a kind comrade, I stayed. To my horror (but not to my surprise) he woke me to say that the forces of capitalism and socio-imperialism had destroyed themselves in a final bout of self-aggrandisement and that we were the only people left. So I had to stay inside really, what with all that radiation running about, although I must have slept pretty heavily to have dozed through total global destruction. I now plan to rebuild a socialist society and the Commissar says he'll be back in a few years to see how I'm getting on.

So if there are any cells of socialism left out there (that's socialism if you speak German) come on over to sunny Albania and we'll build the revolution together — the both of us.

Guy Elliott

BRIGHTON BIKES

THE 5th Annual London-Brighton Bike Ride takes place on Saturday, 3 May, leaving Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park at 7.30 am. In 1977 there were 108 riders, in '78 325 and last year 2,500. This year more than 5,000 people are expected to take part. This is not a race but a fun ride, a gentle jaunt through Sussex; many people will be ordinary cycling commuters who don't race or tour, so while one may of course seek to get to Brighton as fast as possible, there is no hurry.

Any bike that moves in a reasonably straight line would be suitable, but three or more gears would make it easier. There will be support vehicles carrying repair people and able to give a lift to anyone struck down by exhaustion. There will also be tea wagons, lunch at pubs and various entertainments such as street theatre and it's hoped a brass band will perform.

The ride will follow a quiet route through some of the more attractive villages in mid-Sussex, with a mid-afternoon meet on Ditchling Beacon (just outside Brighton) before a massed descent with police escort into Brighton itself.

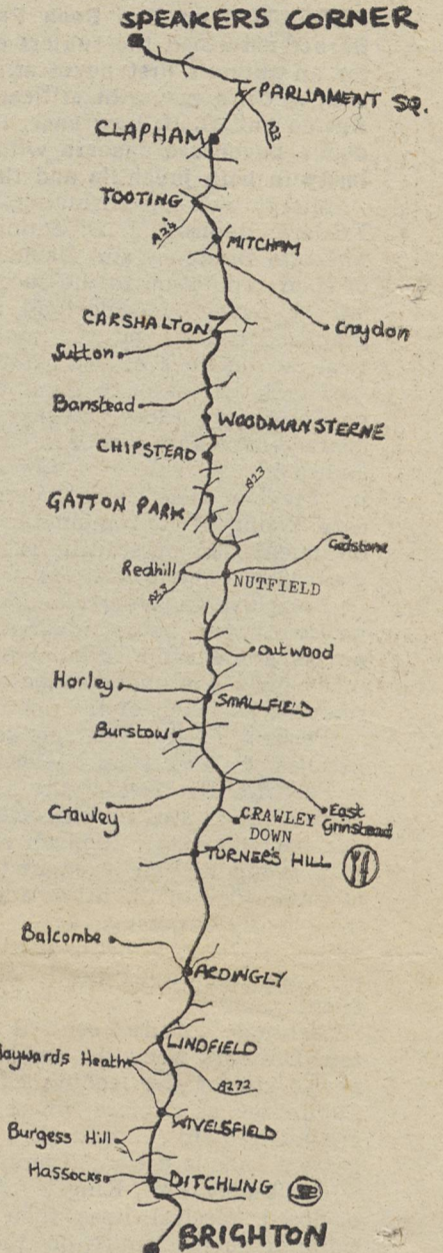
Accommodation has been arranged for 2,500 in halls, at a small charge, but bring a sleeping-bag. There's a "Bicycle Bop" in the evening.

Special trains have been arranged for the return to London, one at 6.30 pm on Saturday, the next on Sunday at 5 pm and there may be others. These may be crowded however. Alternatively, you could ride back to London on Sunday.

Riders are being encouraged to get sponsored for the Ride, with money going to the British Heart Foundation.

Route maps and what's-on-in-Brighton information will be available at the start of the ride. Tickets for the "Bicycle Bop" are on sale from London Cycling Campaign. The Ride is free, but donations to cover the costs (50p per person) will be gratefully received by collectors on the way.

Roddy Hallifax



ONGOING NUDISM SITUATION

By a Special Correspondent

ALL now seems quiet on the Brighton front, but a week is a long time in politics and seven days ago there was nearly a bloody confrontation in the bustling seaside resort. As naturists were indulging in peaceful picnicking on the newly-designated nudist beach, a group of strange looking characters appeared on the far left of the horizon. Proceeding on the platform of "Basic Rights for Students," they militantly denounced the bourgeois parasites and expressed solidarity with the workers in the bathing costume manufacturing industry who form an integral part of the international working class. They condemned the practice of shunning swimsuits and thus trying to make the workers pay for the crisis. The only way forward is to nationalise the top 200 beaches by direct action using all means necessary with compensation only on the basis of proven need.

The sunbathers, annoyed at this interruption, believing it to be an attempt at secondary voyeurism, expressed the opinion that the beach gained valuable foreign currency for Britain and invited the protesters to pay a visit to a taxidermist on their own behalf and, when they refused to pay the protesters' expenses of about £100, the latter became restless and, as one grabbed a piece of glass of similar type to that used in the skylights on the sixth floor of Connaught House, one had a dream of the Sussex sands like the River Tiber, foaming with blood.

As matters were reaching a consummation devoutly to be unwished, a wind of change blew away the white hot heat which had prevailed so far, and the nudists retired to their bathing machines whilst the demonstrators marched off shouting "Hail the Red Army."

BEAVER COMPETITION

(With apologies to the New Statesman)

Max. 250 words

Wanted by 6th May, 1980

A complimentary review of

"BOYS AND GIRLS TOGETHER"

(see item page 10) for a quality journal.

You don't have to see the film—use imagination.

A prize of two tickets to the film of West End show of your choice for the best, printable entry.

The prize will be awarded entirely at the discretion of the Editors.

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on

SATURDAY, 3rd MAY, 1980

10.00 am - 5.30 pm

Admission: £1

Further details:— Tel. LSE Students' Union 405 1977

BEAVER BOOKS



A NOVEL VIEW

THE PORTRAYAL OF UNIVERSITIES IN MODERN LITERATURE

RECENTLY on The Book Programme, Julian Barnes described the subject of University life for an author's first novel as a "definite no go area". On a par with critical papers on Jane Austen and D. H. Lawrence, the theme of academic adventure appears with alarming regularity in both juvenilia and the mature novel.

Many writers, including Kingsley Amis, Frederic Raphael, J. D. Salinger, Tom Sharpe, Malcolm Bradbury and David Lodge owe much of their reputation to the success of their "university novels". Almost all are semi-autobiographical and are largely humorous, self-analytical recollections of lost youth.

The large majority focus on either Oxford or Cambridge (does this say more about the character of the author or the University?). James Joyce's descriptions of Dublin University in "Stephen Hero" and "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" remain the most substantial documentation of student life outside the two great university towns.

Both Evelyn Waugh and C. P. Snow have written about both universities in numerous novels, and Phillip Larkin's first novel contains many images of undergraduate life as vivid and relevant as much of his poetry.

Perhaps most loved and admired (not least because of a successful television dramatisation) is Frederic Raphael's "The Glittering Prizes." With what is still an extremely fresh, exuberant and witty style Raphael examines the lives of a group of privileged undergraduates, both at Cambridge in the fifties and subsequently in their early working lives. Highly autobiographical, Raphael fictionalises early sexual experience, the tragic death of a close college friend, and the closed, bitchy world of the "Cambridge culture" centred around the Amateur Dramatic Society. Towards the end of the novel, one of the leading characters sums up Cambridge as a place where important issues are "stirred up . . . and then all turned into a game. Talk is action. Cambridge again."

In "Lucky Jim", Kingsley Amis follows more enclosed, farcical lines than Raphael. Potentially a superb satire on the pitfalls of academic life, it errs on the side of exaggeration—it itself becomes "too clever". The novel charts the course of a newly appointed lecturer's initial discovery of "true" university life, in-



volving troublesome, misguided students and amusing sexual confrontations. Like Raphael, much is drawn from experience, and life at the untitled "College" resembles his own undergraduate days at St John's, Oxford. The novel is dedicated to Phillip Larkin, his St John's Companion, who had written his own, far more sombre, fictionalised impression of Oxford.

Indeed, in Larkin's own introduction, he describes his own initial meeting with Amis—being introduced to " . . . the hell of a good man who shoots guns" (referring to Amis' genius

for imaginative mimicry in imitating the sound of gunshots). Larkin continues "For the first time, I felt myself in the presence of a talent greater than my own." "Jill" concentrates exclusively on a first year undergraduate and the central character appears as the archetypal anti-hero—the displaced, working-class, social outcast in a privileged world. Filled with bitter personal recollections for any student, his initial loneliness and sexual frustrations lead to an exaggerated love for the girl of the title and much of the narrative is concerned

with calculated, withdrawn self-examination.

Joyce's "Portrait of the Artist" contains many startling similarities. Again closely autobiographical, Joyce traces the early development of Stephen Daedalus from his first memories through school and ultimately to the Catholic University of Dublin. Portrayed as a cold, purely academic institution wrapped thickly in the rags of the Jesuit faith, the university is no place for the creative artist. Misunderstood, highly irritating, and distressed with petty student politics, Daedalus becomes immersed in books, and creates "the perfect woman" — both sympathetic and sexually inviting, yet never attainable. Consequently he attempts to discover his true vocation "by flying by the nets of nationality, language and religion" and leaves the restrictive university for Paris.

Comic authors, David Lodge, Tom Sharpe and Malcolm Bradbury all concentrate on college lecturers rather than students. Lodge's "Changing Places" portrays the annual exchange between a lecturer from England and a professor from the USA, and the ensuing academic and social tangles are well constructed if not actually humorous. The fact that the sleeve-notes describe the denouement as "a flourish that surprises even the author himself" challenges even the first comment. A lecturer himself, Lodge highlights the lecturer's involvement in the students' life of protests, sit-ins and sexual liberation of the late 'sixties. Indeed, the author covers no new ground at all.

In "Porterhouse Blue", Tom Sharpe seems to be extending the ground covered by C. P. Snow. Such heroism, if praiseworthy for its intentions, is disastrous in its execution. In "The Masters", Snow's exhaustive study of power, the author examines the battle to replace the dying Master of a Cambridge college, and Sharpe (whether intentionally or otherwise) picks up the tale and relates the new Master's plans for radical change. The embarrassing Carry-On style can be read in an evening and forgotten even sooner. Images are dull, scenes are hackneyed and emotions un-lifelike. I found more amusement in the first ten pages of "The Glittering Prizes" than in the entire length of Sharpe's novel.

GEOFF S. DREMLAIN
LUCY A. BENJAMIN

THEORY AND INEQUALITY

David Allon examines two new economic text books

Social Goals and Economic Perspectives, 220pp. April 1980. G. P. Marshall. (Penguin Books, £2.50).

THIS book will be found useful for a course in applied economics and third-year social science majors. It is concerned with the feasibility of applying economic analysis to the social sciences, and in particular to the question of inequality of incomes and wealth.

Initially Marshall sets a "societal" framework for considering the empirical data on income and wealth distribution in the United Kingdom. He sets forth the normative economic efficiency equations, and uses valuable notation to denote externalities effect on utility functions.

Marshall emphasises that calculating the social welfare function leaves unanswered the question of method of achieving optimum equity and efficiency. An ethical framework,

whether liberal or pro-public sector, is needed to prescribe either cash grants to preserve individual freedom, or price controls and centrally determined allocation.

Most of the book is devoted to detailed study (plenty of charts) of income and wealth inequality in the United Kingdom, and the effectiveness of state programmes in redressing the matter. Much of the data is extracted from the 1974 Royal Commission report (investigation was headed by Lord Diamond).

During the existence of the Welfare State, roughly 1949 to 1974-5, the redistribution did not improve equality if we consider perfect equality of income as the objective. What Marshall shows is an altered income distribution where both market forces and income transfers have lowered the quantile income of the top five per cent, and raised the shares of the

middle classes. Marshall questions the practical effectiveness of the progressive tax system in achieving the goal of equality.

In sequence, Marshall writes about the relevance of wealth inequality, as this is a source of inequality of streams of income (dividends, rents) and of future opportunity. The concentration of wealth is heavily skewed, with the top 10 per cent owning close to 80 per cent of wealth, and without any significant decrease in the last 25 years. Poverty and income maintenance are both considered at length. The market solutions—private charity and minimum wage—are compared in effectiveness to state programmes.

The book is a theoretical elaboration of inequality with a high intellectual standard. It lucidly studies the main aspects of inequality and serves as interesting, though at times "heavy" reading.

A Textbook of Economic Theory. Fifth edition, pub. 1980. A. W. Stonier & D. C. Hague. (P.P. 700, £7.95).

THIS text on economic theory is designed for students commencing their university studies, but can also serve as a useful reference to more advanced students. The book covers both micro and macro economic theory, yet omits international trade, welfare economics, and public finance.

The greatest asset of this particular edition is the fully outlined and classified form, easily approachable through the 15-page table of contents. Also subtitles abound in the text itself.

How does this basic economics text compare with the highly popular **Positive Economics** by R. G. Lipsey? In the theory of the firm, the text reviewed concentrates fully on theoretical analysis. Each chap-

ter is introduced by a list of economic assumptions; an educated approach, which the beginner may find too complex. In comparison, Lipsey devotes portions of his text to explore real world economic behaviour and elaborates on vague concepts like the goals of the firm.

On the macro level, e.g., the treatment of money, the definition and historical background is similar, but Lipsey continues with far greater detail to deal with the banking system and the supply of money. Lipsey, unlike these authors, also elaborates on the quantity theory, and integrates money into the theory of National Income.

But **A Textbook of Economic Theory** covers a wider field by writing separate chapters, as in the classical approach, on marginal productivity, Wages, Rent, Interest, Profits, and an up to date coverage of technical progress and capital accumulation.

ENTS..ENTS..ENTS..ENTS..ENTS.. ..ENTS..ENTS..ENTS..ENTS..ENTS

I DIDN'T KNOW I LOVED YOU TILL
I SAW YOU GROWING OLD

IN which Garry Glitter makes his London comeback, extreme right wing sympathisers indulge in mindless violence, and Ent's actually makes a profit!

Make no mistake: Gary's comeback was purely the result of financial hardship. In fact reliable sources inform me that he had in fact gone bankrupt. Whether or not he was bored with life "off the road" was purely a secondary consideration. The only reason for his retirement, save old age, was that he could no longer come up with the goods.

Consequently, it was hardly surprising that he should be no less the worse for wear, indeed the decline was decidedly evident. Beneath his now threadbare garments, flab bulges out of the seams, even the merest physical exertion renders him

breathless, and rumour even has it that he is, wait for it, bald! Yes bald! That once powerful voice is now wavery and falters badly on long and high notes, while the backing band, no long the Glitter Band — they left him years ago — is pitifully inadequate.

Fortunately, the audience was with him from the start, and the sing-a-long-a-Gary atmosphere helped to disguise many of the man's more glaring inadequacies. To give credit to G.G., he is still a great showman and has that rare ability to play an audience, and whip it up to a frenzy.

This very nearly proved disastrous, when an over-exuberant member of the uninvited skinhead contingent present took to the stage during "Leader of the Gang" and successfully evaded attempts to evict him. Further trouble took place immediately after the double G had finished, when the British Movement clashed with students, resulting in several

of the right-wing element being arrested by the police.

Thankfully, there was no further trouble during the remainder of a highly successful night which was highlighted by an excellent hour of Ska by Desmond Dekker and his band. Though an earlier contemporary of Gary Glitter (Israelites was a late '60s hit), Dekker maintained a self dignity which was a pleasure, rather than an embarrassment, to watch. Ok, so reggae is a less demanding form of music than rock 'n' roll, but surely that more than anything points to the fact that G.G. should pack it in now for ever, rather than continue to make a fool of himself in public: better remain immortal for a few excellent singles than die an undignified death by over-kill.

Old rock 'n' roll stars never die, they just grow fatter.

Get the hint Gary?

PATRICK EGGLESTON



MANY HIPPIY RETURNS

ROY HARPER? Yes, THE Roy Harper. Some, evidently knew him well; others were curious; others still wondered why they had to pay 50p to go and drink/look for a friend/play crash ball invaders in the convivial Three Tuns. I mean, it's all so desperately so un-hip, isn't it? Longish hair, facial vegetation, age suspect, and he plays an acoustic guitar! Certainly, there were cynics in attendance. They hadn't come to the Tuns to listen to this rubbish.

But for quite a few people, this gig, a warm-up for his first tour in about five years, was more than welcome, and those of the Harper persuasion formed an appreciative herd of standing and squatting persons before the stage for a sample of the new, way overdue, "Unknown Soldiers" album and, hopefully, a few old classics.

What is he like? He's folk,

I suppose. But the sound he makes isn't exactly what you think of as "folk": nothing particularly jolly or matey about it; no beer and tee-shirt stance; he's not into nasal protest, either. Friendly, intelligent—yes. But whatever we might think of all things "hippy" (what a damning label), Roy Harper has a refreshing lack of, well, "folksiness".

His songs are personal, reflected, drawn out, loosely structured, but tightly played. Songs about love, comfort, despair, shoddiness of civilisation generally, and a quietly pastoral interlude with "One of those days in England". Even here he has a touch of dry humour: "One of those days in England, with a sword in every pond..."

The four-piece band he fronted for this set made a rich sound, restrained, occasionally exciting, and Harper gives it an edge

almost of exhilaration, using his guitar incisively like a lead instrument, instead of just strumming the thing. Yup, it feels good. And it goes down well. Definitely an encore.

Cries for some of his older songs went unheeded, though, notably those for "I hate the white man", which for some reason he is often found to be unwilling to play. I said he wasn't a "protest singer", but this song contains some of the bitterest outrage I have come across on record. Hear it on his "Flat, Broque and Berserk" album.

In a completely different vein from most of his material, I can recommend the raucous and rollicking "Watford Gap" for which Harper was sued by a well-known motorway service station. Plastic cups of used bath-water, anyone?

Phil Davies

THREE TUNS RETREAT

As you may or may not know, the Three Tuns Bar is closing on its present site this term and moving to the garage to make way for the Director's nuclear bomb shelter. To commemorate the passing of this notable nite spot to pastures new, there will be a series of memorial concerts.

A special concert will be held on Friday, 2nd May when the Jags (I've got your number written on the back of this year's model) will be playing in the Three Tuns Bar. Also, on Tuesday, 6th May, we are visited by the Septres, featuring Glem Matlock and Danny Kustow (ex of the Tom Robinson Band).

ARTS EXTRA . . . ARTS EXTRA . . . ARTS EXTRA AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

"... And Justice for All" has a strong story-line. A young idealistic lawyer, Arthur Kirkland, meets injustice head on, and as much is created in the courts as is resolved. His activities involve him in a terrifying helicopter flight, being consigned to gaol for contempt of court and negotiating with a desperate client holding armed police at bay. He faces a professional ethics committee, a wrongly-convicted client, a mad colleague, a suicidal judge, a careless colleague, an evil judge, an amorous colleague and a senile grandfather.

The main thrust of the plot, amid all the other distractions, is the indictment, on the charge of rape, of the slimy Judge Fleming, a man whom Arthur hates, but whom he has to defend or face exposure for breach of professional confidence. This blackmail does persuade Arthur to take on the case, and the scene is set for a heart-thumping, gut-wrenching, heartstring-tugging finale.

Arthur is faced by a moral dilemma: defend a man he hates and knows to be guilty (he has photographic evidence of Fleming's S & M predilections) or refuse and be destroyed for something he knows to have been right though his colleagues condemn it. His actions in the trial of Judge Fleming in the court-room finale are in the stirring tradition of "To Kill a Mockingbird"

and the whole genre of courtroom drama.

This is a tragicomedy, mixing moments of farce with others of moving, high drama. It's an approach that has been around at least 400 years, if not in the polished Hollywood form. My objection to its use here is not on any moral ground, but merely because I resent having my feelings so cleverly manipulated. It's all right to pull the audience along on a roller-coaster of emotion to a cathartic climax, but to show such disdain for the process, to alternately drop and recapture the mood, is discourteous. The subject, the characters and their situation, are the same in the tragic and the comic moments—there's no comic relief character as such—so one should always be aware, even as one laughs, of the essential moral issues involved. But it is as if the director were saying, "Go on, enjoy yourselves for a bit, have a good laugh, I'll look after the big issues, I know you can't take it".

This is a very successful, clever, well-written, emotive film, which is very funny in parts. It's slickly done, but basically trivial, trivialising its own subject and our emotions. It misuses Al Pacine's evident skills and, instead of doing justice to injustice, it uses its easy exposure of the many faults of the American legal system for self-gratification and cheap entertainment.

Roddy Hallifax

ATHLETIC UNION

All members of the Cricket Club, please note that the 1980 Code of Laws is now in operation.

Mr. Hopley would be most grateful if players actually read the new version.

A.U. Irish love story

What follows constitutes the story of L.S.E. R.U.F.C. in Ireland, as tempered by considerations of courtesy and propriety. The party left the Three Tuns Bar at about 7.30 p.m. on Thursday, 13th March . . . (expletives — severally — deleted . . . returning to Euston at about 5 p.m. on 18th March.

Has anyone seen P. A. Hendry, who left the Dublin—Dun Loughaire train in search of a sheep to take back to his flat mate, Mr. President E. M. Walters, as a souvenir of the tour? Unfortunately the intrepid, beer-swollen bloater was

adopted by an especially gnarled old ewe, who totally understandably took him for her long-lost hubby who departed in search of a polyester sweater in 1965.

Thanks to Rathmines RFC for another sound thrashing and some of the most incompetent fizz-buzz since Princess Anne played it in the bar of the Royal Windsor Hotel having completed victory in the local pony competition.

Much more could be said, but the bar is open, the beer is getting warmer by the second, and this report has been sufficiently tedious already.



L.S.E. Boat Club 1st VIII racing in the Tideway Head of the River, which was won by the National Squad. L.S.E. B.C. came 236th overall, out of 420. Grew: T. J. Bottomley (cox), J. Maxey (stroke), D. J. Mapley (7), M. A. Cannizzo (6), T. Ludszweit (5), C. Fleming-Brown (4), R. Harris (3), I. Dunsfordw (2), J. Mindell (bow). Picture shows L.S.E. B.C. overtaking Llandoff R.C.

CONFERENCE EXTRA

N.U.S. enters Eurovision Song Contest

There's a hole in the Alliance, Dear Trevor, Dear Trevor,
There's a hole in the Alliance, Dear Trevor, a hole.

Well fix it, Dear David, Dear David, Dear David,
Well fix it, Dear David, Dear David, fix it.

With what shall I fix it, Dear Trevor, Dear Trevor,
With what shall I fix it, Dear Trevor, with what?

With NOLS, Dear David, Dear David,
With NOLS, Dear David, Dear David, with NOLS.

But where do I find them, Dear Trevor, Dear Trevor,
But where do I find them, Dear Trevor, oh where?

In tanks, Dear David, Dear David,
In tanks, Dear David, Dear David, in tanks.

They're shooting, Dear Trevor, Dear Trevor,
They're shooting, Dear Trevor, they're shooting.

At what are they shooting, Dear David, Dear David,
At what are they shooting, Dear David, at what?
At us, Dear Trevor, Dear Trevor,
At us, Dear Trevor, Dear Trevor, at us.

Fire back, Dear David, Dear David,
Fire back, Dear David, Dear David, fire back.

With what shall I fire back, Dear Trevor, Dear Trevor,
With what shall I fire back, Dear Trevor, with what?

With Liberals, Dear David, Dear David,
With Liberals, Dear David, Dear David, with Liberals.

There aren't any Liberals, Dear Trevor, Dear Trevor,
There aren't any Liberals, Dear Trevor, there are none.

Well sod it, Dear David, Dear David,
Well sod it, Dear David, Dear David, sod it.

With what shall we fire back, Dear Trevor, Dear Trevor,
With what shall we fire back, Dear Trevor, with what?

Errrrr, with the Alliance, Dear David, Dear David,
With the Alliance, Dear David, with the Alliance.

But there's a hole in the Alliance, Dear Trevor, Dear Trevor,
There's a hole in the Alliance, Dear Trevor, a hole.

—Written by Brian Eaton and performed at Conference by
Anna Soubry and Chris Bones.